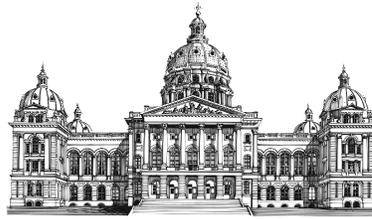


Iowa Legislative Fiscal Bureau



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Office Of State-Federal Relations

ISSUE

Review the duties of the Office of State-Federal Relations, accomplishments during the past 2 years, and areas in which the Office could improve its ability to obtain federal moneys for State projects.

AFFECTED AGENCIES

The Office of State-Federal Relations and departments which receive, or may be eligible to receive, federal funding.

CODE AUTHORITY

Chapter 7F, Code of Iowa

BACKGROUND

The Office of State-Federal Relations was established to develop a nonpartisan State-federal relations program accessible to all 3 branches of government (Attachment A).

CURRENT SITUATION

The Office was appropriated \$230,460 and authorized 3.0 FTE positions for FY 1995. Even though 3.0 FTE positions are authorized there is only funding for 2 full-time FTE positions and a part-time secretarial position. Since FY 1988, the Office's budget has ranged from \$189,844 to \$230,460.

According to the Office, during the past 2 years the focus of the Office has been on the appropriations process, and in working to secure grants and contracts for the State of Iowa through the following projects.

- The Iowa Communications Network (ICN) - To date about \$33.5 million in federal support for ICN-related activities has been obtained. This includes funds for the Iowa National Guard (\$10.0 million), Iowa hospitals for telemedicine projects (\$12.0 million over 3 years), distance education (Star Schools, \$8.0 million), and Federal

Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) (\$3.0 million). Other projects are in process.

- Flood Recovery - After the State was declared a disaster area during the 1993 floods, the Office became involved in the flood recovery effort. The focus of this effort was on emergency appropriations (total flood relief for Iowa is estimated at \$1.4 billion), and State federal coordination, and policy development.
- Housing - The Office has been involved in attracting about \$2.5 million in special project funds from the federal agency of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The continuing focus of the Office is on the representation of State agencies on federal issues, policies and programs, and to strengthen the working relationship with members of Iowa's congressional delegation and staff, and with federal agency officials. Some of the ongoing activities include:

- Monitoring federal legislation and policies through the congressional appropriations process, assessing the impact to Iowa, and reporting to the appropriate State agencies. This allows Iowa agency personnel to identify funding issues in advance of final action and respond to the Iowa delegation regarding the impact of potential budget cuts and report language.
- Working with federal agencies and associations to discuss Iowa's needs and to obtain information and technical assistance.

To strengthen the working relationship between State officials and the Iowa congressional delegation, the Office for State-Federal Relations has developed:

- Federal priorities at the beginning of each year by the State agencies and presented them in booklet form to the Iowa delegation.
- A Federal-State Directory. The Directory is updated on a regular basis and includes State and federal personnel, members and staff of the Iowa congressional delegation, government, and Washington D.C. personnel.
- A weekly newsletter which is sent to State agency federal liaisons when Congress is in session. This includes a summary and status of major congressional activity on issues of interest to the State.
- The Office location in Washington, D.C. The Office is located within the Hall of States building on Capitol Hill which allows easy access to other state offices and associations tracking issues vital to states. The Hall of States maintains a library which is a vital source of material.

Overall, departments report that the Office is providing a satisfactory level of information and service. However, there are several areas in which the Office and other State agencies have stated improvements could be made.

- Contact with congressional offices in Washington, D.C. on proposed legislation and current issues has not grown in several years. While the relationship with congressional delegation staff is excellent, a consistent flow of communications is not.
- Issue expertise in subject field of importance has not been developed except perhaps in the areas of telecommunications and information management.
- Grants and federal regulations are not tracked on a regular basis.

- The Department of Transportation suggested that the ability to access additional federal policy through databases and tracking systems would increase the range and depth of assistance to policy makers in Iowa. On-line services such as ***Congressional Quarterly's Washington Alert*** or the ***Washington Post's LEGI-SLATE*** would allow retrieval of bill status, bill summaries, committee reports, markups etc. in a more timely manner.
- INTERNET access would allow the Office access to all databases on the network as well as E-Mail capabilities.

OTHER STATES

Currently 13 states maintain Washington, D. C. offices. The offices vary in size and function and a comparison of various office functions is illustrated in Attachment B. The table below reflects the results of a survey completed by the National Governors' Association in 1991 showing how Iowa's federal office compares with offices of neighboring states.

<u>State</u>	<u>Number of Staff</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<i>Iowa</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>230,000</i>
Illinois	7.0	500,000
Minnesota	3.0	210,000
Missouri	4.0	200,000
Nebraska*	1.0	86,400
Wisconsin	4.0	300,000

*The Nebraska Office is not a state agency. The Office is contracted out to a consultant. Seven of the larger agencies in the state share the expense although all agencies except state universities use the services of the office.

The functions of the Washington offices of the states surrounding Iowa are basically the same as Iowa's Office, although with a larger staff the Illinois Office is able to specialize on issues. It should be noted that the City of Chicago and the Illinois General Assembly both have offices in Washington.

ALTERNATIVES

- Status Quo - If the budget level remains constant, the Office will not be able to maintain present services. Cuts will have to be made to account for inflation and costs of office operations. At the end of 1993, the Secretary II position was downgraded from permanent to part-time. Without a budget increase, the Office may be forced to eliminate the part-time secretarial position.
- Increase resources available to the Office - Priorities suggested by the Office include:
 - Restoration of the part-time secretarial position to a full-time, permanent status. This position could also be upgraded to an Administrative Assistant classification so that more issue-oriented work could be done. The estimated annual cost to upgrade from a part-time Secretary II to a full-time Administrative Assistant I is \$13,000.

- Add 1 professional staff position. An additional staff member could provide specialization in assigned issues. Other possible duties could include grantsmanship and tracking the ***Federal Register***. The estimated cost of an Administrative Assistant IV is \$53,000.
- Upgrade the information management resources of the Office. This would include adding electronic mail, accessing INTERNET, and subscribing to certain on-line services such as LEGI-SLATE or Washington Alert. Some hardware/software improvements in office equipment would be needed. Estimated cost for technology improvements is \$16,000.
- Increase the training and in-service education opportunities for State agency representatives on both process and substantive topics (appropriations, welfare reform legislation, etc.). No cost estimate available.

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7F.1 Office for state-federal relations.

1. *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to establish, as an independent agency, an office for state-federal relations which will develop a nonpartisan state-federal relations program accessible to all three branches of state government.

2. *Definition.* As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires, "office" means the office for state-federal relations established pursuant to this section.

3. *Office established.* A state-federal relations office is established as an independent agency. The office shall be located in Washington D.C. and shall be administered by the director of the office who is appointed by the governor, subject to confirmation by the senate, and who serves at the pleasure of the governor. The office and its personnel are exempt from the merit system provisions of chapter 19A.

4. *Office duties.* The office shall:

a. Coordinate the development of Iowa's state-federal relations efforts which shall include an annual state-federal program to be presented to Iowa's congressional delegation, the sponsorship of training sessions for state government officials, and the maintenance of a management information system.

b. Provide state government officials with greater access to current information on federal legislative and executive actions affecting state government.

c. Advocate federal policies and positions which benefit the state or are important to state government.

d. Monitor federal budget policies and assistance programs and assess their impact on the state.

e. Strengthen the working relationships between state government officials and Iowa's congressional delegation.

f. Improve the state's ability to establish key contacts with federal officials, officials from other states, organizations, business groups, and professional associations in order to share information and form cooperative agreements.

87 Acts, ch 233, §126

Table 2
Major Functions of Washington Offices

<i>State</i>	<i>Monitor Federal Legislation</i>	<i>Lobby State Congressional Delegation</i>	<i>Lobby Congress Generally</i>	<i>Assist State Agencies</i>	<i>Promote Tourism</i>	<i>Respond to Casework Referrals</i>	<i>Monitor Federal Regulations</i>	<i>Promote Grants</i>	<i>Represent State Interests with Agencies</i>	<i>Liaison with White House</i>	<i>Work with Other National Organizations</i>
Alabama	■	■		■	■				■	■	■
Alaska	■ †	■ †	■ †	■			■		■ †	■	■
American Samoa									■ †	■ †	■
Florida	■	■	■ †	■ †					■	■	■
Hawaii	■	■	■	■			■		■	■	■
Illinois	■	■ †	■	■							
Indiana	■	■	■	■			■	■	■	■	
Iowa	■	■		■	■				■	■	■
Kentucky	■ †	■		■ †						■	■ †
Maine	■			■ †						■	■ †
Maryland	■	■	■	■		■					■
Massachusetts	■ †	■ †	■	■ †			■	■		■	■ †
Missouri	■ †	■ †		■ †	■					■	■ †
Nevada	■ †			■ †	■ †			■ †	■ †		
New Jersey	■ †	■ †	■ †	■ †	■			■	■	■	■ †
North Carolina	■ †	■ †	■	■ †	■				■	■ †	■ †
Ohio	■	■	■	■					■	■	■
Puerto Rico	■ †		■ †	■		■	■ †	■	■ †	■	■
South Carolina	■	■			■					■	■
Texas	■ †	■	■ †	■		■	■	■	■ †	■	■
Utah	■ †	■ †	■ †	■	■	■	■ †	■	■	■	■ †
Virginia	■	■	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
Washington	■ †	■		■ †	■						■
Wisconsin	■ †	■ †	■	■	■			■ †	■ †	■ †	■ †

■ Washington office performs this function.

■ † Washington office also noted this function as "critical."